

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:**

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**Salisbury Fire Department Lends Support to those Affected by Hurricane Irene**

**Team of Six Salisbury Firefighters Deployed to Hyde County**

Salisbury, NC – August 28, 2011\_Salisbury Fire Chief Bob Parnell announced today that a team of six Salisbury Firefighters has been deployed to Hyde County to assist during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. Parnell received a request for aid from the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at approximately 8 am this morning. Due to Salisbury's proactive assessment of available personnel and the conducting of necessary equipment checks, the local team was prepared and able to deploy within a few short hours of the EOC's request. The requested duration of the mission is for up to 72 hours and reflects the standard deployment period as outlined in the North Carolina Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid Plan.

Mayor Susan Kluttz, speaking on behalf of the Salisbury City Council shares, "The City of Salisbury is honored to lend this vital support to our fellow North Carolinians. Our Salisbury Firefighters are highly-trained and well-equipped to deliver this much-needed support and we are sincerely proud of their selfless acts of heroism and their dedication to others."

Interim City Manager Doug Paris states, "We are glad to help and proud of our Salisbury Fire Department. The outstanding support portrayed by these off-duty firefighters, offers a strong testimony to the service they provide to our community each day."

Listed below are deployed Salisbury Fire Department personnel and individual mission assignments:

Battalion Chief David Morris	Officer in Charge, Communications
Fire Captain Cory Orbison	Safety and Training Officer, Documentation
Fire Captain James Farley	Company Officer
Captain Darrell Nichols	Engineer
Firefighter Dustin Tanner	Working Crew
Firefighter Chris Damato	Working Crew

Parnell notes that all deployed personnel hold certifications as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), Rescue Technicians, and Firefighters. In addition, several hold Surface Water Rescue certifications.

Parnell said, "I have been advised that the cities of Salisbury Concord, Statesville, Shelby, and Gastonia are responding and sending the requested engines, tools, and

crews. Our team of six firefighters, aboard Salisbury Fire Engine #2 and Squad #3, departed at approximately 10:35 am and arrived in Hyde County at approximately 5:15 pm this evening. Per Battalion Chief David Morris, responding crews were initially being staged at Mattamuskeet Elementary School in the town of Swan Quarter, but due to generator failure have been diverted to Hyde County's Emergency Operations Center. Per Chief Morris, response teams are currently receiving briefings on their assignments and accommodation details. Morris said, "We are the first response team to arrive from the Western part of the state. We are seeing a lot of wind damage to structures, similar to what we experienced locally with Hugo back in 1989. So far, we have observed some flood damage, but mostly damage from the wind with many trees down and upon buildings." Chief Morris shares that the Salisbury Fire Department has been assigned coverage of the Ponzer Community Fire Station. Salisbury will be responding to emergency calls and conducting related duties for the Hyde County station. Morris said, "This will provide a break for the Ponzer firefighters who have been on duty for 48 straight hours and allow them to check on their families and properties. Salisbury will attend a mobilization assessment meeting tomorrow (Monday) morning at 0800 hours with the Hyde County Emergency Management officials. If no rescue missions or services are pending at that time, Salisbury will be released at noon to make the return trip home." Ponzer is in the western part of Hyde County and is located on Hwy. 264. The station offers protection for the small town of Belhaven, NC.

Parnell adds, "In addition to the engine, squad truck, and our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trailer, deployed apparatus includes chain saws, medical kits, a thermal imaging camera, personal protective equipment, breathing equipment, and water rescue equipment. Each Salisbury team member is equipped with a viper radio and has the necessary safety equipment available should assignments include medical response, collapse rescue, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), water rescue, or tree clearing. Fully equipped with the tools and resources to sustain them for 72 hours, the Salisbury team also has the ability to procure rations and fuel as necessary and available."

Parnell notes that Salisbury citizens should be assured that the level of fire service for our community is in no way affected by the mutual aid deployment. "The team dispatched to Hyde County is comprised of off-duty firefighters and all positions at the Salisbury Fire Department remain covered during this time." Parnell adds, "Both the state and federal declarations of disaster pave the way to obtain reimbursement for expenses associated with this deployment. Salisbury has initiated the necessary documentation process and we will file for reimbursement once the mission concludes."

The Salisbury Fire Department currently operates four fire stations and employs seventy-six full-time personnel. The department receives additional support from nine part-time firefighters. The City of Salisbury is an equal opportunity employer with over 180 different job classifications and 400 full time positions. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury and its services and departments, please visit us on the web at [www.salisburync.gov](http://www.salisburync.gov). To receive updates regarding local initiatives, meetings, programs, and events, please join the City of Salisbury's Facebook users group at [www.salisburync.gov/facebook](http://www.salisburync.gov/facebook) or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CitySalisburyNC>.

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